Message

From: Guy, Kerry [Guy.Kerry@epa.gov]
Sent: 10/25/2018 2:29:19 AM
CC: Faulk, Libby [Faulk.Libby@epa.gov]; Jenkins, Katherine [jenkins.katherine@epa.gov]; Jenkins, Joy [Jenkins.Joy@epa.gov]; Wall, Dan [wall.dan@epa.gov]; Williams, Laura [williams.laura@epa.gov]; Myers, Craig [Myers.Craig@epa.gov]; Guy, Kerry [Guy.Kerry@epa.gov]
Subject: OSC Dispatch update: potential release from Captain jack Mill Site

OSC Dispatch: Region 8

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

October 24, 2018 update for initial report on October 22, 2018, potential release from Captain Jack Mill Site

Overview: On October 22, 2018, at approximately 11:10 am, an incident regarding mine discharge and potential fish impacts to Left Hand Creek in Boulder County, Co was reported to Region 8 response. The incident location was reported near the intersection of Left Hand Canyon Drive and California Gulch Road, less than 1 mile downstream of the Captain Jack Mill Superfund site, Operable Unit 01 (Big Five adit). Notifications were made and EPA and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) began investigating to assess if the fish kill was related to ongoing work at the Big Five adit.

An inspection of the site by CDPHE on the afternoon of October 22, showed the mine adit continuing to drain at a controlled discharge of approximately 20-30 gallons per minute into the ponds from a pipe connected to the flow through bulkhead. Both upper and lower settling ponds were operating, with water overflowing into the upper pond stand pipe and discharging downstream to the second settling pond.

The chosen remedy for the Big Five adit acid mine drainage discharge is an in-tunnel treatment system and an engineered flow through bulkhead. In May 2018, the valve to the flow through bulkhead was shut to begin the process of in-mine treatment. On September 6, the bulkhead valve was partially opened to stabilize the elevation of the rising mine pool. The discharge was set at approximately 20-30 gpm,

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions:

EPA Actions: On October 23, EPA response in conjunction with CDPHE conducted water sampling and monitoring along Left Hand Creek starting just above the Left Hand Water District intake approximately 15 miles downstream of the Big Five adit. Decreasing pH levels (below pH 6) were observed starting approximately 1.5 miles downstream from where the Big Five adit settling ponds discharge into Left Hand Creek. The depressed creek pH levels appeared to be both a factor of insufficient neutralization from the in-tunnel treatment system exacerbated by low baseline flows in Left Hand Creek.

On October 24, EPA and CDPHE temporarily closed the flow through valve on the bulkhead until a neutralization processes can be implemented in the settling ponds. The settling ponds appear to be treating less effectively which may be a result of lower pH mine drainage discharge caused by rising elevations of the mine pool.

Media Interest: A joint press release was sent out by both EPA and CDPHE at approximately 11:30 am on October 24. The following news stories from the noted sources were published following the joint press release.

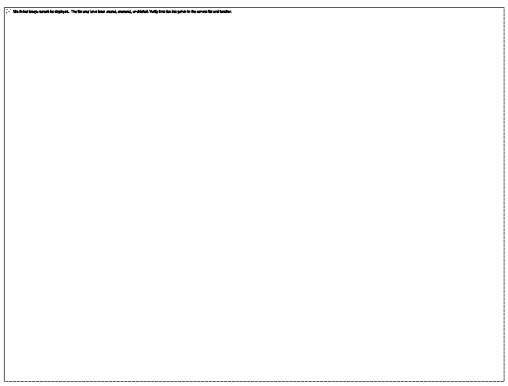
Boulder Daily Camera: http://www.dailycamera.com/boulder-county-news/ci_32228097/feds-state-investigating-possible-mine-discharge-boulder-countys

Feds, state investigating possible mine discharge in ...

www.dailycamera.com

A potential mine discharge and fish kill in the upper portions of Boulder County's Left Hand Creek linked to an Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site is being investigated by federal and ...

Colorado Public Radio: https://www.cpr.org/news/story/orange-water-dead-fish-discovered-downstream-from-superfund-site-in-boulder

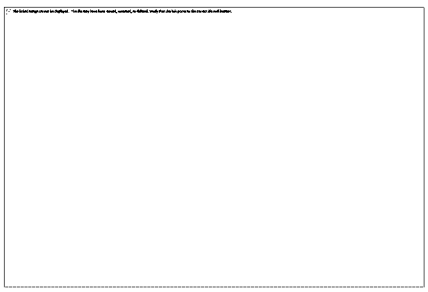


Orange water, dead fish discovered downstream from Superfund site in Boulder County

www.cpr.org

A possible discharge of water from an old mine site upstream from Left Hand Creek in Boulder County killed an unknown number of fish.

Republished by Denver Post: https://www.denverpost.com/2018/10/24/left-hand-creek-mine-discharge-fish-kill/



Boulder County Left Hand Creek fish kill, possible mine ...

www.denverpost.com

A potential mine discharge and fish kill in the upper portions of Boulder County's Left Hand Creek linked to an Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site is being investigated by federal and ...

Republished by US News: https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/colorado/articles/2018-10-24/authorities-investigate-possible-discharge-in-colorado-creek

Authorities Investigate Possible Discharge in Colorado ...

www.usnews.com

BOULDER, Colo. (AP) — U.S. and Colorado officials are investigating a possible mine discharge and a fish kill in a Boulder County creek linked to a federal Superfund site. The Daily Camera ...